I have conducted the war against Your Majesty with no animosity. A line written to me before or after the last battle would have stopped my march, and I would gladly have foregone the advantage of entering Moscow. If anything of our old friendship remains, Your Majesty will take this letter in good part. In any case I shall deserve thanks for rendering this account of what is happening in Moscow.

Despite the poet's art, all the imaginary details of the burning of Troy can never equal the reality of that of Moscow. The city was built of wood, the wind was very strong, all the fire engines had been removed. It was literally an ocean of fire!

23d. I have just levied a conscription of 140,000 men in France, and of 30,000 in Italy. The result of the battle of Borodino and our entry into Moscow must not reduce our energy.

October 4th. The enemy's movement towards Kief shows clearly that they are expecting reinforcements from the army of Moldavia. To march against them would be to operate in the line of their reserves, and without any supporting positions. Moscow, now that it is burned down and deserted by its inhabitants, is of no use to us; it cannot even accommodate our sick and wounded.

If the army is to fall back on Smolensk, is it wise to follow up the enemy and to run the risk, while executing a movement that would look like a retreat, of losing several thousand men in the face of an army that knows the country, that has many spies, and a large force of light caralry ?